DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 299 487 CG 021 132

AUTHOR Schmidt, Gary R.
TITLE Self-Monitoring and Boundary Spanning: Unexpected Gender Differences.
PUB DATE Mar 88
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association (34th, New Orleans, LA, March 31-April 2, 1988).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Patterns; College Students; Higher Education; Role Playing; *Sex Differences
IDENTIFIERS *Boundary Spanning; *Self Monitoring

ABSTRACT

The relationship between self-monitoring and boundary spanning was investigated in this study. In an attempt to isolate the behaviors used by self-monitors to facilitate performance in a boundary spanning role, a laboratory setting was used to videotape subjects assuming a contrived boundary spanning role. Subjects (N=234) were introductory psychology college students who were divided into high, middle, and low self-monitoring groups based on scores on the Snyder Self-Monitoring Scale. After viewing two videotaped exchanges between a model "Campus Escort" and "visitor," subjects were shown short video sequences of a visitor expressing his interest and concerns. Following each sequence, subjects role played their response to the visitor as a Campus Escort (role play condition) or selected the most appropriate responses (multiple choice condition). No differences were found regarding the appropriateness of the messages in either condition. High self-monitoring males used more response categories during their role plays than did any other group. High self-monitoring females were rated as more extraverted. An investigation of these results showed that for males, acting ability covaried with the number of response categories used during role plays, verbal fluency, and overall performance and with females' extraversion and friendliness ratings. These results suggest that the behaviors of the boundary spanners were not determined by their sensitivity to social cues but rather by their ability to assume a role and this role may be influenced by stereotypic gender differences. The ability to assume a role may be more important to boundary spanning roles than sensitivity and behavioral pliability to social cues. (ABL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED299487

Self-Monitoring and Boundary Spanning: Unexpected Gender Differences

Gary R. Schmidt

Tulane University

Running head: SELF-MONITORING

CG 021132

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Gary R. Schmidt

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

The relationship between self-monitoring and boundary spanning behaviors was investigated. Caldwell and O'Reilly (1982) found high self-monitors were better boundary spanners at earlier stages of job tenure. In an attempt to isolate the behaviors used by self-monitors to facilitate performance in a boundary spanning role, a laboratory setting was used to videotape subjects assuming a contrived boundary spanning role. The Snyder Self-Monitoring Scale (1974) was administered to 234 introductory psychology students. Subjects scoring at least one standard deviation above and below the mean were assigned to high and low self-monitoring groups; subjects scoring within two points of the mean were assigned to the moderate group ($N = 20$ each group; total $N = 60$; 29 males, 31 females). Subjects were given a job description of a fictitious Campus Escort job requiring individuals to be friendly and outgoing as well as sensitive and responsive to the concerns of visitors to the campus. After viewing two videotaped exchanges between a model Campus Escort and visitor, subjects were shown short video sequences of a visitor expressing his/her interests and concerns. Following each sequence subjects role played their response to the visitor as a Campus Escort (role play condition) or selected the most appropriate response from a list of responses (multiple choice condition) that had been weighted for appropriateness in a pilot study. Subjects participated in both conditions. Role plays were rated by three graduate students to determine: a) the response categories used in the role plays; b) the number of topics (categories) discussed; and c) the role players' friendliness, extraversion, verbal fluency, nervousness, and overall performance. The appropriateness of a role play was determined by multiplying the percentage of use of a response category by the categories appropriateness weight; for the multiple choice condition, the appropriateness weight of the response category selected was used. No differences were found regarding the appropriateness of the messages in either condition. High self-monitoring males used more response categories during their role plays than did

any other group ($p < .05$). High self-monitoring females were rated as more extraverted than any of the other groups across trials ($p < .05$). An investigation of these results were undertaken. A factor analysis of the Self-Monitoring Scale ($N = 714$) yielded six factors. The first three factors were similar to those in previous factor analyses (Briggs et al., 1980; Gabrenya & Arkin, 1980) and were labeled Extraversion, Acting Ability, and Other Directedness. Factor scores for the sixty subjects were correlated with the dependent measures. For males, Acting Ability covaried with the number of response categories used during the role plays ($r = .48$), verbal fluency ($r = .47$), and overall performance ($r = .41$) and with females' extraversion and friendliness ratings ($r = .50$; $r = .40$). No other correlations reached significance. These results suggest that the behaviors of the boundary spanners were not determined by their sensitivity to social cues but rather their ability to assume a role and this role may be influenced by stereotypic gender differences. Self-monitors may not be involved in impression formation, especially when assuming an unfamiliar role. This may impact assessment center exercises or performance tests in which role plays are used to assess boundary spanning abilities and suggests that the ability to assume a role may be more important to boundary spanning roles than sensitivity and behavioral pliability to social cues.

Self-Monitoring and Boundary Spanning:

Unexpected Gender Differences

Personnel psychologists have used personality and other individual difference variables for the selection and placement of job applicants. However, as Guion and Gottier (1965) have pointed out, the predictive validity of personality measures is poor, thereby offering limited utility to personnel specialists. Variables which moderate the relationships between personality measures and behavior have been proposed (Cheek, 1982; Mischel, 1968; Kogan & Wallach, 1964; Wallach, 1962). In particular, Snyder (1974, 1979) introduced the concept of self-monitoring. Briefly, individuals scoring high on the Self-Monitoring Scale are able to monitor and adjust their behavior to match the appropriateness of a given situation. These individuals therefore exhibit greater behavioral variance across situations than low self-monitors and their presence in a group may reduce the apparent relationship between personality traits and behavior (Snyder, 1974, 1979).

Snyder and Monson (1975) found persons scoring high on the self-monitoring scale exhibited more social conformity between reference groups than did low self-monitors. In addition, they found high self-monitors reported more situational variability in their behaviors than did low self-monitors. In addition, high self-monitors tend to choose situations which provide clear specifications of a prototypic individual or role (Snyder & Gangestad, 1980).

Lippa (1976, 1978) found high self-monitors display less expressive consistency across channels (body, head, voice) than low self-monitors but display *more* cross-situational consistency in the exhibition of extraverted behavior. Lippa (1978) also suggests that certain types of expressive consistency are learned and self-enforced and that high self-monitors may be expected to show greater expressive consistencies in these domains. Snyder (1979) incorporates these findings into a "recipe" for self-monitoring:

> a behavioral "script" that generates the pattern of *cross-situational consistency in background self-presentation* and *cross-situational specificity in foreground self-presentation* are the behavioral consequences of self-monitoring (p. 193).

Dabbs, Evans, Hopper, and Purvis (1980) suggest self-monitoring is a *state* rather than a *trait* in which, prior to entering a situation, a high self-monitor decides which image (or prototype) that he/she is going to project. Once the role has been decided, the role's general plan or script is followed rather than monitoring and modifying behavior on a moment-to-moment basis. They believe these differences reflect either dissimilarities in the type of information stored in memory, the access and retrievability of such information from memory, or both.

Self-monitoring appears intuitively related to the organizational concept of boundary spanning. Boundary spanning roles serve to link the organization to its environment. A boundary spanner occupies a position on the boundary or fringe of an organization and is responsible for interacting with individuals and organizations existing outside of an organization. It is through its boundaries that the organization is able to receive and communicate information as well as represent itself to the environment (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Tushman, 1977). Persons who monitor and adjust the appropriateness of their behavior in accordance with changing situations or environments would seem to be better performers in boundary spanning positions than individuals who cannot.

The relationship between self-monitoring and boundary spanning has been investigated by Caldwell and O'Reilly (1982). The subjects were field representatives of a large franchise organization responsible for serving the franchise outlets. Employees who had scored high on the Self-Monitoring Scale were generally rated as better performers than the low scorers. However, the impact of self-monitoring appeared to "wash out" over time leaving tenure as the primary predictor. Caldwell and O'Reilly (1982) believe that this may

reflect either the increased skill obtained through experience or a selection bias that results in the retention of employees who are high self-monitors.

It therefore appears that individuals predisposed to monitor their environment and alter their behavior in accordance with environmental characteristics are better performers in a job that requires such skills than those who are not. Therefore, the selection of high self-monitoring individuals for boundary spanning positions may result in better performance sooner during an employee's tenure. Turnover may also be reduced by either selecting-out low self-monitors during the application process or by offering low self-monitors specialized training to assist them to adapt more efficiency to their new role.

This study investigates the relationship between self-monitoring and the performance of a boundary spanning role in an attempt to isolate the behaviors which distinguish high from moderate and low self-monitors. To do this, a boundary spanning role was contrived; the job of Campus Escort. Campus Escort duties include showing the university to prospective students, their parents, and visitors as well as answering questions and offering information about the university, the city, and the collegiate experience in general.

In this study, subjects were divided into low, moderate, and high self-monitoring groups according to the Snyder (1974) Self-Monitoring Scale. They were exposed to a series of short videotapes and asked to indicate how they would respond to the situation shown in the tape by selecting a response from a series of written responses specified by the experimenter. In addition, subjects were also exposed to a series of short videotapes and asked to role play the response they would make if they were actually in the particular situation.

High self-monitors were expected to select more appropriate response categories than moderate or low self-monitors (Douglas, 1983). High self-monitors are also expected to be rated as more friendly and extraverted than moderate or low self-monitors (Douglas,

1983; Lippa, 1976, 1978). High self-monitors are expected to appear more calm and speak with greater verbal fluency than either moderate or low self-monitors. In general, the overall performance of high self-monitors is expected to be more effective than moderate or low self-monitors in accomplishing the requirements of the Campus Escort role (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1982).

The order of exposure to the two response conditions are expected to influence the subjects' responses. Subjects participating in the forced choice condition prior to the role play are expected to perform higher on all the dependent variables (number of categories used, appropriateness, friendliness, extraverted, verbal fluency, nervousness, and general effectiveness) due to the advantage of having exposure to the list of forced choice responses. However, within the same test condition sequence, high self-monitors are expected to perform better across dependent variables than moderate or low self-monitors.

Method - Study A

Subjects

Introductory psychology students ($N = 234$) completed the Snyder Self-Monitoring Scale modified from a true-false response format to a 5-point Likert-type response format. Self-monitoring scores centered around a mean of 74 ($SD = 8.58$). Subjects scoring greater than one standard deviation from the mean were assigned to the high self-monitoring group, subjects scoring within two points of the mean were assigned to the moderate self-monitoring group, and subjects scoring more than one standard deviation below the mean were assigned to the low self-monitoring group. Individuals assigned to these groups were contacted by phone and requested to participate in a Job Simulation experiment for further course credit. The resulting sample contained twenty subjects in each of the three self-monitoring groups ($N = 60$). There were a total of 29 males and 31 females.

Stimulus/response materials

Ten thirty-second videotapes were developed to use as stimulus scenes for the Campus Escort Job Simulation. These scenes portrayed prospective students and/or their parents. The general format of the scripts for each stimulus scene was as follows. First, the actor(s) introduced themselves specifying the city from which they originated. The actor(s) next mentioned that this was the first time they had visited this city followed by a comment about the city which was either favorable of unfavorable. The actor(s) continued by saying that university was "rather nice," if they had an academic major in mind they mentioned it otherwise they did not. Finally they said where they would prefer to live (i.e., sorority or fraternity, on/off-campus). The scene concluded with the actor asking the question, "What I would like to ask you is, why should I come to this university?" Actors ranged from a male graduate student, a female law student, to two "new wave" female undergraduates, and a female undergraduate with her parents.

The stimulus scenes were pilot tested to assure plausibility and to assign appropriateness weightings to the response alternatives included on the multiple choice response sheet. Different appropriateness ratings were generated for each separate stimulus tape.

The response categories available to the subjects in the forced choice condition included: Fun, Academic, Extracurricular Activities, Post-Graduation Placement Opportunities, Social Activities, Experiential Possibilities, and Advantages of the City.

Two stimulus scenes were used as examples for subjects to view prior to participating in either test condition. These examples were intended to enhance the subjects' role expectations of the Campus Escort position by offering cues which were expected to be used more extensively by high self-monitors. The remaining eight stimulus scenes were placed into four random orders with each thirty second scene being followed on the video

monitor with one minute of "black"[1] tape. Following the minute of "black", the next thirty second scene would begin, and so on.

Procedure

Subjects were categorized by self-monitoring scores and by gender. Subjects were also classified into two test conditions: 1) a multiple choice paper-and-pencil test prior to performing role plays; or 2) performing role plays prior to performing in a paper-and-pencil multiple choice condition. Four trials were given to subjects in both the multiple choice and the role play conditions resulting in a repeated measures design. The general design was therefore a 3 x 2 x 2 x 4 factorial design (self-monitoring x gender x test sequence x trials).

Subjects were run in pairs. Each pair was told they were participating in a Job Simulation experiment for the position of Campus Escort in which two separate selection procedures were being evaluated – a behavioral measure and a paper-and-pencil measure. They were told they would view a series of short video tapes (stimulus scenes) portraying prospective students and their parents and would be asked to respond to the persons in the videotape as they would if they were actually the Campus Escort faced with that situation. Once the general instructions had been given, the subjects were given a job description of the Campus Escort job and, following review of the job description, were shown the two example stimulus scenes. The subjects were then put into different rooms.

In one room a subject viewed stimulus situations on a video monitor and role played the responses that the subject would make if "actually in" the stimulus situation. The subjects' role plays were videotaped so that their behavior could be rated at a later time. In the other room, a subject concurrently viewed the same (yolked) stimulus materials as the subject performing the role play and selected from a list of responses the one that best reflected the response the he of she would perform if "actually in" the stimulus situation.

---

[1] "Black" tape contains no sound or picture and is observed on the monitor as a screen filled with a grey-blue shade.

At the end of the fourth trial, subjects switched places, were given instructions appropriate to the test condition, shown four more different stimulus scenes, and were asked to respond accordingly.

Rating Procedure

Two rating procedures were used. The videotapes of the subjects' role plays were rated to determine which response categories were used for each stimulus scene and the relative percentage of emphasis each received from the subject during the role play. Subjects interpersonal skills were also rated for their prceived friendliness, extraversion, verbal fluency, nervousness, and overall performance. Each rating procedure is discussed separately below.

Nine graduate students participated in the task of rating the 240 role plays (4 role plays across 60 subjects). Ratings took place in teams of three raters with each team rating twenty subjects' role plays. The raters were given definitions of the different response categories to read and refer to if necessary during the rating process. The first series of ratings required the rater to place a mark by each of the response categories mentioned by the subject in his/her response. At the completion of the role play, the raters estimated the percentage of emphasis each of the marked categories received during the role play. For instance, the response category Academics may have received about 45% of total message emphasis with the categories Social, City, and Fun receiving 25%, 5%, and 25% emphasis, respectively. Message emphasis was not simply the amount of time spent discussing a particular category, although this was certainly a component, but included perceived strength of conviction to the response category.

Next, raters judged the subject on a five-point Likert-type scale for friendliness, extraversion, verbal fluency, nervousness, and an overall effectiveness rating. Two subjects' role plays could not be rated due to a technical malfunction in one instance and a failure of the subject to hear the actor in a single stimulus scene in the other instance. This

resulted in fifty-eight subjects performing four role plays and two subjects performing three role plays.

Inter-rater agreement was determined for the role plays. Mean inter-rater correlations across all groups was .76 for the response category ratings and .47 for the interpersonal trait ratings. The low correlations for the interpersonal ratings may reflect the fact that while raters agreed about *what* was said they did not agree as often about the role player's interpersonal behavior or *how* it was said.

Results

There were no significant differences between subjects according the order of stimulus scenes, the appropriateness of the responses categories selected in either the role play or in the multiple choice conditions. There were also no significant differences between subjects regarding verbal fluency, nervousness, or overall effectiveness. Ratings of friendliness approached significant, $F(2, 47) = 2.73$, $p = .07$, with high self-monitors receiving higher mean ratings than low or moderate self-monitors. Females also tended to be rated as more friendly than males, $F(1, 47) = 3.99$, $p = .05$. As expected, there was a significant extraversion difference between the groups of self-monitors with high self-monitors receiving the highest ratings followed by the moderate and low self-monitors. The gender by self-monitoring interaction approached significance, $F(2, 47) = 3.00$, $p = .06$, and when trials were factored in this interaction was statistically significant, $F(6,141) = 2.44$, $p < .05$. Figure 1 shows that this difference is due primarily to the clear separation between high female and male self-monitors. There was also a significant interaction between gender and self-monitors groups in regards to the number of response categories used per role play, $F(2, 47) = 3.93$, $p < .05$. Interestingly, high self-monitoring males used significantly more response categories per response than the other self-monitoring by gender groups - a pattern that is the inverse of the gender by high self-monitoring groups results for extraversion (see Figure 2).

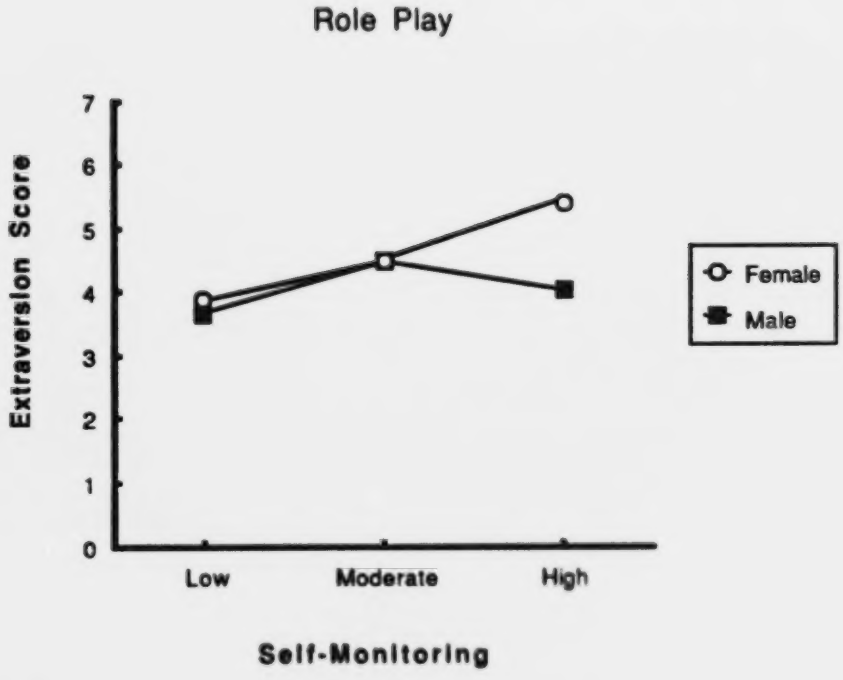

Figure 1. Rated extraversion as a function of self-monitoring and gender, $p = .06$, *ns*.

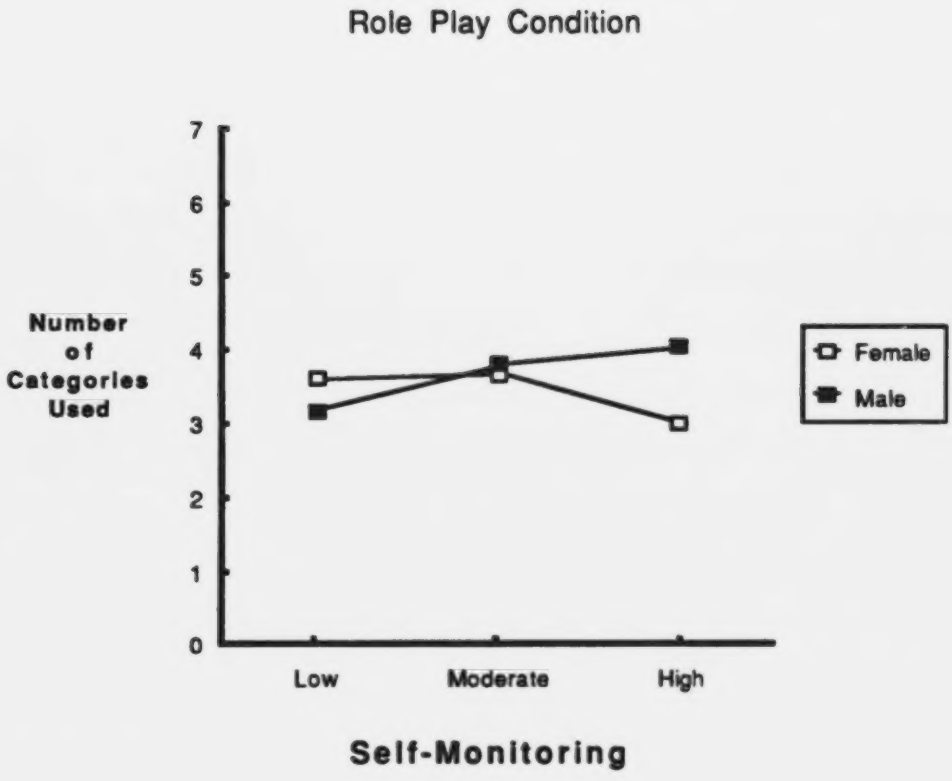

Figure 2. Number of response categories used in the role play as a function of self-monitoring and gender, $p < .05$.

The fact that there were no differences between groups of self-monitors according to the appropriateness of the messages selected at fist appears to cast doubt ability of self-monitors to adapt their behaviors to social cues. However, a number of plausible alternatives exist to explain this outcome. First, the response categories were not equally appropriate across all stimulus conditions and this may have served to reduce the variability of response appropriateness. The response categories Academic, Social Activities, and City Characteristics were used significantly more that the other alternative responses ($p < .001$) and appeared appropriate to some degree for each stimulus condition. Secondly, it could be that the subjects were not able to process the information available in the short time period allowed and would show more sensitivity if they were able to rehearse their role and refine their "prototypic" role. Without this opportunity, the high-self-monitors may have relied upon a generic or stereotypic role similar to the *background* role Snyder earlier refers to. In this case, without adequate time to adjust their *foreground* behaviors, they were left with only their *background* behavioral "scripts" to guide their responses. This also seems consistent with Dabbs' et al. (1980) conception of self-monitoring – role selection rather than behavioral adaptation. With little rehearsal time and knowledge of the range of situations they will be exposed to, generic or stereotypic roles were selected by high self-monitors. Once more knowledge of the range of possible situations is known, then roles that are prototypic to each specific situation may be developed and enacted accordingly. Indeed, the low and moderate self-monitors are likely engaging in the same processes but with much less efficiency than the high self-monitors. This may, in part, explain why Caldwell and O'Reilly's (1982) results - self-monitoring predicted performance differences during early job tenure but washed out over time as effective behaviors were finally learned by all job incumbents.

Explanation of the differences that were found are more difficult. Why should high self-monitoring males use significantly more response categories while high self-monitor-

ing females appear more friendly and outgoing? Before speculating about the possible reasons for these outcomes, a further study was proposed to investigate these differences more closely.

Study B

Seven hundred and fourteen introductory psychology students were administered the Self-Monitoring Scale (using the 5-point response format) over a three year period. The sixty subjects participating in Study A were among this group.

A principal components analysis using a varimax rotation was performed upon the self-monitoring data. Six oblique factors were generated (see Figure 3). These factors were compared to the factor structures obtained by previous researchers (Briggs et al., 1980; Gabrenya & Arkin, 1980). The first three factors obtained appear consistent with primary factors reported previously. They include Extraversion (Factor 1), Acting Ability (Factor 2), and Other Directedness (Factor 3). No attempt was made to interpret the remaining factors. These results confirm the stability of the major factors of the self-monitoring scales.

Factor scores were derived for all subjects for each of the six factors. The scores obtained by the sixty subjects participating in Study A were selected and correlated with the dependent variable scores from Study A to determine if specific factors of self-monitoring might help explain the results that were obtained. Correlations were generated for both sexes, for females only, and for males only. These correlations are shown in Figure 4.

No significant relationships emerged when the measures of both females and males are combined. However, once a distinction is made, noticeable differences emerge. Factor 2 or Acting Ability is the only factor related to any of the dependent variables for either gender. For females, this factor is related to extraversion (r = .50) and friendliness (r = .40) measures; for males, it is related to the number of response categories used per role play (r = .48), verbal fluency (r = .47), and overall performance (r = .41). Acting Ability,

Figure 3.

Oblique Solution Primary Pattern Matrix-Orthotran/Varimax

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
1	.22	.12	.24	.04	.53	-.17
2	-.59	.25	-.11	.32	.21	.01
3	.53	-.32	.35	.08	.22	.23
4	-.01	-.00	-.20	.07	.73	.22
5	.01	.58	-.39	.03	.13	.12
6	-.02	.49	.20	.22	-.03	.27
7	.21	-.13	.68	-.00	-.07	.10
8	.21	.76	.10	-.13	-.00	-.07
9	.02	-.01	-.03	.72	-.06	.01
10	.06	.12	-.14	-.07	-.22	.65
11	.26	.02	.36	.22	-.39	.27
12	.57	.34	-.14	.11	-.06	.06
13	-.24	.19	.60	.09	.01	-.08
14	.75	-.11	.11	-.16	.03	-.00
15	-.00	-.18	.04	.09	.08	.71
16	-.34	.24	.39	-.13	.09	.13
17	-.12	-.02	.09	.69	.17	-.05
18	-.09	.76	.07	-.03	-.04	-.02
19	-.40	.21	.22	.36	.04	.26
20	.48	.43	-.01	-.27	.03	-.03
21	.52	-.00	.33	.05	.36	-.05
22	.57	.38	-.09	.11	.08	-.09
23	.73	.05	-.08	.00	.00	.00
24	.00	.26	.04	-.45	.17	.35
25	-.03	.04	.15	-.18	.17	.55

Figure 4.

Correlation Matrix
Self-Monitoring Factors & Dependent Variables
Males & Females

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
# Categories Used	.12	.25	-.18	.04	.03	-.06
Friendly	.14	.25	.01	.18	.16	-.17
Extraverted	.26	.27	-.10	.23	.03	-.05
Verbal Fluency	.13	.14	-.19	.05	.03	-.08
Nervous	-.06	-.12	.13	-.13	.05	.12
Overall	-.15	-.24	.13	-.16	-.15	.11

Correlation Matrix
Self-Monitoring Factors & Dependent Variables
Females Only

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
# Categories Used	-.08	.05	-.31	-.06	-.21	-.26
Friendly	.08	.40*	-.03	.14	.12	-.25
Extraverted	.28	.50*	.01	.32	.10	-.11
Verbal Fluency	-.22	-.22	-.11	.05	.14	-.07
Nervous	.18	.10	-.04	-.29	-.01	.21
Overall	.03	-.08	.14	-.29	-.18	.27

*$p < .05$

Correlation Matrix
Self-Monitoring Factors & Dependent Variables
Males Only

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
# Categories Used	.35	.48*	-.02	.16	.29	.11
Friendly	.21	.09	.09	.24	.30	.06
Extraverted	.25	.01	-.27	.11	-.02	.12
Verbal Fluency	.33	.47*	-.27	.02	.01	.02
Nervous	-.24	-.34	.30	.00	.09	.01
Overall	-.30	-.41*	.13	-.04	-.12	-.04

*$p < .05$

therefore, is related to female's nonverbal behaviors with it is related to male's verbal behavior. No other correlations were statistically significant.

These results suggest that the observed differences between self-monitors in this context was not a function of their sensitivity to social cues or underlying extraversion *per se*, but rather was a function of their ability to enact a role. In this case, they were told to be outgoing and friendly - behaviors in which high self-monitors are particularly skilled (Lippa, 1978). It was therefore probably easy for the high-self monitors to assume this stereotypic role. Since they had no prior experience with this situation and hence no recognizable prototypic roles from which to select, and because they did not seem to be monitoring their social environment in a moment-by-moment basis, they probably had little choice than assume stereotypic roles.

The literature dealing with gender differences generally concludes that males are more verbally assertive than females and that women tend to use a more indirect and nonassertive style than men (Pearlman & Cozby, 1983). In addition, females tend to be more sensitive to nonverbal behavior and may consequently be more adept at controlling their nonverbal impressions. Assuming that high self-monitors are more aware of gender-appropriate behaviors and cues, they may tend to maintain a consistent *background* behavior specific to their gender. Therefore, in novel situations high self-monitors may assume behaviors stereotypic to their gender's behavioral socialization until they can obtain additional information and select or develop more prototypic roles corresponding more closely to the specific demands of the situation. Male high self-monitors may therefore emphasize their verbal assertiveness and fluency in novel situations while high self-monitoring females emphasize their nonverbal skills and nonverbal sensitivity.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to isolate the behaviors used by self-monitoring individuals in an employment position conducive to self-monitoring, that is, a boundary

spanning position. It was found that there were no differences regarding the appropriateness of the verbal responses used in the different role plays although some responses were more appropriate than others. Differences that did arise dealt with the strategies used by high self-monitors. This includes slightly more friendly behavior and more outgoing and extraverted behavior. This is consistent with past research (cf. Lennox & Wolf, 1984; Lippa, 1976, 1978). The results of this study lend support to the contention by Dabbs et al. (1980) that self-monitoring is a "role selection" process in which, prior to entering a situation, a high self-monitor selects the image that he or she wishes to portray. Without clear expectations or knowledge of role appropriateness, or without adequate rehearsal time to refine the role, the high self-monitors appear more likely to rely upon generic, stereotypic and socially desirable roles suitable for many situations. These stereotypic roles also appear to be influenced by sex role socialization. For instance, high self-monitoring males may *sound* more friendly and outgoing in a novel situation while their female counterparts may *act* more friendly and outgoing. Further research investigating this relationship more directly may yield interesting results.

Also, it appears that self-monitors may be gathering information about social cues and receiving feedback regarding their current roles and may make adjustments based upon this information. However, it may be the case that these adjustments are not made at the moment this information is received but rather may occur at a later time after the information is processed and rehearsed. High self-monitors may differ from low self-monitors not according to the process that is used, but rather in the speed with which this process takes place.

Gender differences and self-monitoring have been reported previously. Anderson and Thacker (1985) reported gender differences in the behaviors of self-monitors during a one-day assessment center for computer salespersons. In this study, they find support for their contention that self-monitoring would facilitate the organizational adaptation more for

women than men for a job is a stereotypical masculine one. While levels of self-monitoring ability were not related to the males' performance in the assessment center, it was for the females'. Also, The factor Other Directedness, which refers to the monitoring of social cues for appropriateness information or behavioral feedback, was also related to the females' performance ratings.

There is a fundamental difference between the design of their assessment center and the laboratory design used in Study A. For instance, the subjects in the Anderson and Thacker study were self-selected individuals who were actually pursuing a job as a computer salesperson and may therefore possessed characteristics different from our subjects who were assigned to attend a research project without knowledge of what would be entailed (they knew a role play would be required). Also, Anderson and Thacker had only fifteen female subjects participate which suggests that the representativeness of females in general was restricted.

This study does have the advantage of a practical setting and does introduce some interesting possibilities. For instance, it is likely that upon initial exposure to a novel situation requiring yet undeveloped behavioral roles that high self-monitors rely upon generic stereotypic roles as has been described in this paper. As exposure to this environment continues, the reliance upon a stereotypic role and the ability to enact that role declines as more information about the appropriateness of the situation becomes available. A developmental shift may occur reducing the impact of the Acting Ability dimension and increasing the importance of the Other Directedness dimension. The role would become more refined as more and more information and feedback becomes available and a prototypic role is constructed. If high self-monitors are better at this entire process than low self-monitors, their performance would be expected to improve at an accelerated rate. Over time even the low self-monitors learn the appropriate behaviors, however inefficiently, thereby

eliminating any previous performance differences. This may account for the results obtained by Caldwell and O'Reilly (1982).

Finally, it appears that when persons are to assume a role in which impression management is important, such as a performance test or assessment center, and there are no cues as to the appropriateness of the role, the ability to assume a stereotypic and socially desirable role may distinguish effective from poor performers. It cannot therefore be assumed that high self-monitors will outperform low self-monitors. Indeed, if the role most appropriate to a given situation is similar to the personality of a majority of low self-monitors (e.g., similar to selecting a character actor for a role rather than a more flexible actor), then low self-monitors may outperform the high self-monitors. Without prior knowledge or expectations of a given situation, the ability of high self-monitors appears seriously handicapped. It is only with increased exposure, feedback, and rehearsal that this variable is likely to impact impression formation. Also, it is not clear that those individuals particularly skilled at assuming a role are also skilled at sensing situational cues and adjusting thier roles and vice versa.

References

Aldrich, H., & Herker, D. (1976). Boundary spanning roles and organizational structure. *Academy of Management Review, 3*, 217-230.

Anderson, L.R., & Thacker, J. (1985). Self-monitoring and sex as related to assessment center ratings and job performance. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 6*, 345-361.

Arkin, R.M., Gabrenya, W.K., Appelman, S.S., & Cochran, S.T. (1979). Self-presentation, self-monitoring, and self-serving bias in causal attribution. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 5*, 73-76.

Briggs, S.R., Cheek, J.M., & Buss, A.H. (1980). An analysis of the Self-Monitoring Scale. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 38*, 679-686.

Caldwell, D. & O'Reilly, C. (1982). Boundary spanning and individual performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 67*, 124-127.

Cheek, J.M. (1982). Aggregation, moderator variables, and the validity of personality tests: A peer-rating study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 43*, 1254-1269.

Dabbs, J., Evans, M., Hopper, C., & Purvis, J. (1980). Self-monitors in conversation: What do they monitor? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 39*, 278-284.

Douglas, W. (1983). Scripts and self-monitoring: When does being a high self-monitor really make a difference? *Human Communications Research, 10*, 81-96.

Gabrenya, W.K. & Arkin, R.M. (1980). Self-monitoring scale: Factor structure and correlates. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 6*, 13-22.

Guion, R. & Gottier, R. (1965). Validity of personality measures in personnel selection. *Personnel Psychology, 18*, 135-164.

Keller, R. & Holland, W. (1974). Boundary-spanning roles in a research and development organization: An empirical investigation. *Academy of Management Journal, 18*, 388-393.

Kogan, N., & Wallach, M. A. (1964). *Risk Taking: A study in cognition and personality*. NYC: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Lennox, R.D. & Wolfe, R.N. (1984). Revision of the self-monitoring scale. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46*, 1349-1364.

Lippa, R. (1976). Expressive control and leakage of dispositional introversion-extroversion during role-played teaching. *Journal of Personality, 44*, 5431-559.

Lippa, R. (1978). Expressive control, expressive consistency, and the correspondence between expressive behavior and personality. *Journal of Personality, 46*, 438-461.

Mischel, W. (1968). *Personality and assessment*. New York: Wiley.

Pearlman D, & Cozby, P.C. (1983). *Social Psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Snyder, M. (1974). The self-monitoring of expressive behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 30*, 526-537.

Snyder, M. (1979). Self-monitoring processes. In Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 12, pp. 86-128). New York: Academy Press.

Snyder, M. & Gangestad, S. (1980). Choosing social situations: Two investigations of self-monitoring processes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 43*, 123-135.

Snyder, M. & Monson, T.C. (1975). Persons, situations, and the control of expressive behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 32*, 637-644.

Tushman, M.L. (1977). Special boundary roles in the innovation process. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 22*, 587-605.

Wallach, M. A. (1962). Commentary: Active-analytical vs. passive-global cognitive functioning. In S. Messick & J. Ross (Eds.), *Measurement in personality and cognition*. New York: Wiley, 199-215.